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ABSTRACT

This art education resource, designed for use in the Snite Museum of Art, may also be used with slides or reproductions. Black and white reproductions are included for each of the art works represented, along with title, artist, date, and media information. This three part gallery guide presents a brief synopsis of the stories narrated in the specific artworks. Highlighted text questions invite an examination of the art work for story clues and interpretation. Stories/artworks included in Part 1--Atriuum and Knott-Beckman Gallery, 1500-1700 AD, First Floor are: "Nydia, the Blind Girl of Pompeii" (Randolph Rogers); "The Expulsion of Hagar" (Ciro Ferri); "Judah and Tamar" (Giacinto Brandi); "Mercury Lulling Arus to Sleep" (Pieter Mulier the Younger); "Bathsheba" (Willem van Mieris); and "The Daughters of Cecrops Discover the Infant Erichtonius" (Gerald de Lairesse the Elder). Part 2--Eighteenth Century Gallery, Second Floor, includes: "Lucius Quintius Cincinnatus Called from the Plow to the Dictatorship of Rome" (Studio of Giambattista Tiepolo); "The Finding of Moses" (Benjamin West); "Diana and Endymion" (Jean Restout); "Achilles Mourning the Death of Patroklos" (Jean-Simon Berthelemy); and "The Rape of Proserpina/Persephone" (Jean-Francois de Troy). Part 3--Nineteenth Century Gallery, Second Floor, includes: "Hylas and the Nymph" (Baron Francois Pascal Gerard (and Studio)); "The Fury of Achilles" (Alexandre-Denis Abel de Pujol); "Venus and Adonis" (Pierre-Paul Prud'hon); "Equestrian Joan of Arc" (Paul Du Bois); and "Study for 'The Nights of Penelope'" (Pierre-Paul Leon Glaize). Each of the 3 parts concludes with a bibliography. (MM)

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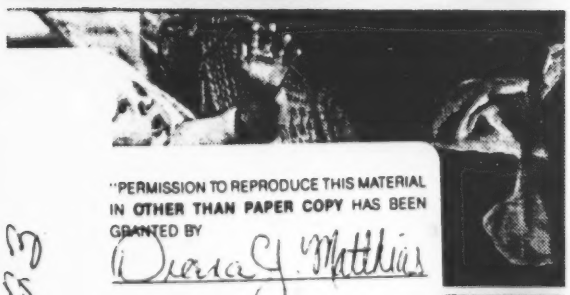

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Snite Museum of Art
Gallery Guide
Part #1

Stories from History, Myth, and the Bible

Atrium and Knott-Beckman Gallery, 1500-1700 AD, First Floor

We hope this gallery guide will help our visitors enjoy the stories from history, myth, and the Bible, which are illustrated in sculpture and painting in the collections of the Snite Museum. When these works of art were first completed, the narratives they depict formed part of the common knowledge of many educated Europeans. Today, although the heroes and heroines may still be familiar, people have often forgotten the details which make each story distinctive. One of the most fascinating aspects of a good story is the way it changes when it is retold. All of the stories in this gallery guide have been reinterpreted in painting or sculpture by artists who probably referred to the sources mentioned in this text.

When you look at a painting or sculpture illustrating a story contained in this guide, see if you can notice if the artist has either stayed faithful to his source or if he has changed the events of the original story. If you do find some changes, can you think why the artist might have made them? Do the changes affect the original meaning of the story? These are just some of the questions we can ask each other when we think about storytelling in art.

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Atrium. First Floor.

Nydia, the Blind Girl of Pompeii

Randolph Rogers.
American. 1825-92.
Marble. 1858.

Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton created the character of Nydia as the heroine of his novel *The Last Days of Pompeii,* published in England and the United States in 1834. This novel fell into the popular genre of disaster stories, for it recounted in meticulous detail the eruption of the volcano Vesuvius, and the destruction in 79 A.D. of the Roman city of Pompeii. In his sculpture Rogers depicts Nydia groping her way through the falling buildings and debris of the city as she makes her way towards the relative safety of the seashore. ***Has Rogers included anything in this sculpture which refers to the falling buildings?***

The novel focuses on the plight of Nydia, the beautiful young girl who is doomed to unhappiness because she is blind and a slave. ***Has the artist really made Nydia look as if she is blind?*** She earned her living by making flower garlands for the rich. ***Do you see any reference to flowers in this work?*** In spite of her servile social position Nydia falls hopelessly in love with Glaucus, a handsome and rich young Greek. Glaucus ignores Nydia's feelings and, to her despair, he pursues a rich young Greek woman. Nydia's jealousy so embitters her life that after she has saved Glaucus and his beloved from the dangers of the volcano, she drowns herself in the Bay of Naples.

Against a sensational background of Roman decadence, the preaching of the early Christians and the invocations of witches, Nydia's courage and final despair so caught the imagination of the English and American public that the novel became a best-seller in both countries. In his sculpted version of Nydia, Rogers captured the appeal of the fictional heroine with such success that more than one hundred versions were ordered from the artist.

The reason for the popularity of Rogers' sculpture of Nydia may have been due to his use of a combination of elements which was unusual in the 1850s. Before 1858 American and European sculptors had referred to the timeless classical ideal by making their figures resemble the calm and noble-looking sculptures of gods and goddesses made by Greek and Roman artists. The figure of Nydia is startlingly different, for although she keeps the Greek hairstyle, beautiful face

and semi-nudity associated with the timeless classical ideal, her gesture shows us that she is reacting to a particular event as she leans forward, straining to hear where the next dangerous fall of debris will come from. The synthesis of the timeless ideal of classical art with the particular historical interest of Romantic art, made the sculpture of Nydia into an image which spoke to Americans with great immediacy in the mid-nineteenth century.

The story of Nydia illustrates the beginnings, in the nineteenth century, of the breakdown of the rigid separation of social classes. Even though Nydia is courageous, talented and educated, she is condemned to unhappiness because she is a slave who dares to love a rich man. Much of the interest in this story therefore centers around the injustice of class distinctions, which often condemn worthy individuals to menial lives, while allowing the rich the freedom to pursue selfish amusements. It is important to this story to know Nydia's social class. ***Has the sculptor made it clear that she is a poor slave, or is he really more interested in another aspect of this figure?***

Edward G. Bulwer Lytton. *The Last Days of Pompeii.*

Knott Beckman Gallery
First Floor

The Expulsion of Hagar

Ciro Ferri
Italian. 1628/34-1689.
Oil on canvas. c.1685.

In this scene Abraham gestures dramatically as he banishes his second wife Hagar and their son Ishmael from the family home, while Sarah, his first wife, watches from a window. Sarah had been barren all her life, so when she was old she followed the custom of the land of Canaan and found a second wife for Abraham. The new wife was Hagar, Sarah's own Egyptian slave, who quickly conceived and gave birth to a son named Ishmael. Some years later God told Abraham that in her old age Sarah would give birth to a son with whom He would establish His covenant. It happened as God had foretold, and Sarah gave birth to a son named Isaac.

One day when Sarah saw the two boys playing together she grew afraid that as he was the younger son, her own child Isaac would receive only a small part of Abraham's inheritance. Sarah tried to preserve Abraham's inheritance for Isaac by telling Abraham to banish Hagar and Ishmael. Abraham was reluctant to do this at first, for he knew it would result in depriving his older son of his rightful inheritance. At this moment God told Abraham not to worry about Sarah's seemingly unjust request. God said that even though He planned to make Ishmael the father of a great nation, it was Isaac who would inherit from Abraham. The news that God would look after Hagar and Ishmael satisfied Abraham, and when he had supplied them with food and water he sent them out into the desert.

Which figure in the painting is most upset at the breaking up of the family? One of the important members of this family does not seem to be present at this event. ***Which one?*** Ishmael later accomplished his destiny by becoming the ancestor of the Arabs, and Isaac fulfilled his by becoming the founder of the Hebrews.

In their narrative paintings European artists often changed the backgrounds and clothes of their figures, so that the story would seem more immediate and familiar to their viewers. ***What does this painter present to us? A faithful rendering of the Biblical account or a version brought up to date for his own time?***

Genesis: 16: 1-16, 18: 1-15, 21: 1-21

Knott Beckman Gallery
First Floor

Judah and Tamar

Giacinto Brandi
Italian. 1623-1691.
oil on canvas.

There are several Old Testament heroines such as Tamar, who used their feminine attractions to deceive men. Some Biblical scholars believe that the intention of these stories was to promote sexual equality by showing the Hebrews that God could use women as His instruments even when they resorted to what could be called feminine trickery.

Judah chose Tamar to be the wife of his eldest son Er, but after the marriage Er angered God, so God killed him. Following the law of Levirate marriage Judah gave the widow to his second son Onan, reminding him that his first child must bear the name of Er. When Onan refused to father a child with Tamar, God was so angry that He also slew him. After these two deaths, Judah was afraid to give Tamar to his third son as demanded by the law, and instead he told her to return to her father's home and live as a widow.

Some years later, when Judah was making a journey, Tamar disguised herself in a shawl and waited for him at the crossroads. Judah mistook her for a prostitute, and Tamar agreed to sleep with him for the payment of three pledges: his staff, his seal, and the cord on which it hung. ***Has the artist painted the same pledges?*** Judah learned later that Tamar was pregnant and ordered that she be burnt as an adulteress, but when she produced the pledges he understood what he had done, and admitted that his sin of breaking the law of Levirate marriage was greater than her sin of deception. Tamar's son Perez became the ancestor of Christ, and both are listed in St. Matthew's genealogy.

In this story Judah fathers the ancestor of Christ only after he has broken the law of Levirate marriage, and Tamar has resorted to sin and deception. God's mysterious way of achieving His will provoked various interpretations of the story by painters and theologians. Brandi has changed the meaning of the story by removing Tamar's disguise so that she is recognizable to Judah. The painting also seems to refer to a proposal of marriage through the

inclusion of the white veil and the offer of a ring. ***Why do you suppose the artist chose to retell the story in this way?***

Genesis. 38: 6-30.
Mieke Bal. *Lethal Love.*
Andre LaCoque. *The Feminine Unconventional.*

Knott Beckman Gallery
First Floor

Mercury Lulling Argus to Sleep

Pieter Mulier the Younger
Dutch. 1637-1701.
Oil on canvas.

Jupiter, king of the gods, was notoriously unfaithful to his wife Juno. This story of deceit, revenge and reconciliation began when Jupiter tried to hide his new love, Io, a princess of Argos, from the jealous eyes of Juno. When he first declared his love for her, Io was afraid, and she ran away. In order to hide his exploits from his wife Jupiter turned himself into a dark cloud, seen in the stormy sky of this painting, and then he seduced Io in a grove of trees. Before the clouds blew away Jupiter transformed Io into a cow to hide her from his wife, but this metamorphosis did not deceive Juno, who slyly asked Jupiter to give her the cow as a present. Pretending to be innocent Jupiter gave Io to Juno, who handed the cow over to her servant Argus, an appropriate guard who had one hundred eyes, some of which he always kept open. ***Why do you think the artist has not painted Argus's one hundred eyes?***

Io was miserable in her new form, and so Jupiter sent his son Mercury to release her from her captivity. Mulier has illustrated the next scene in the story in which Mercury, disguised as a herdsman with a pipe, lulled Argus to sleep with music and a tedious story. When all his eyes had closed Mercury cut off Argus's head. The painter is telling a story about these particular figures. ***Why do you think he has made them so small? Is he perhaps more interested in another aspect of this scene?***

As a memorial to her faithful servant Juno placed Argus's eyes in the tail feathers of the peacock, where they can be found to this very day. She punished Io by sending a gadfly to chase her across the Ionian sea to Egypt. Io's plight finally caused Jupiter to make a promise of faithfulness to his wife. Juno then responded by returning Io to the form of a woman, and she was worshipped as a Greek version of the Egyptian goddess Isis. In Egypt Io gave birth to Jupiter's son Epaphus, known as the bull-god Apis.

Ovid, *Metamorphoses: Book 1, lines 592-779.*

Knott Beckman Gallery
First Floor

Bathsheba

Willem van Mieris
Dutch. 1662-1747.
Oil on panel. 1708.

One evening, King David, seen in the background in the upper left corner of this painting, was strolling on his palace rooftop, when he caught sight of a beautiful woman bathing. He discovered that her name was Bathsheba and that she was married to Uriah, a soldier in his army. David sent for Bathsheba and she joined him in the palace. Van Mieris has painted Bathsheba at the moment when she is trying to decide whether to obey the summons of the king and commit adultery, or stay faithful to her husband. ***Do you think the painter has changed the emphasis of the story by depicting David as a small, fully-clothed figure in the background of the painting, and Bathsheba as a nude in the foreground?***

The old woman who offers jewels to Bathsheba has been added to the story. ***What might her role be in this representation?*** After David and Bathsheba slept together she became pregnant. It was now clear that something had to be done about Uriah. David told Uriah to take a letter to Joab, the commander of the expeditionary forces. The letter instructed Joab to place Uriah in a battle position where he was likely to be killed. Joab followed the king's orders, and Uriah died in battle.

When this news was brought back to Jerusalem, David and Bathsheba were married and she bore a son. These actions angered God, who sent the prophet Nathan to voice His displeasure. Even though David acknowledged his sin and repented, God punished the couple by killing their first-born son. By the time Bathsheba gave birth to her second son God's forgiveness was complete, for the child was Solomon, from whose line Christ was descended.

In this painting Bathsheba is placed in the foreground so that the viewer concentrates on the moral decision she is making. David was also morally involved in adultery and murder. ***Why do you suppose the painter wanted to stress Bathsheba's moment of decision rather than David's? Was the artist perhaps more interested in presenting Bathsheba's physical attributes rather than her moral anguish?***

2 Samuel 11: 1-27, 12:1-25

Knott Beckman Gallery
First Floor

The Daughters of Cecrops Discover the Infant Erichthonius
Gerard de Lairesse the Elder
Dutch. 1641-1711.
oil on canvas.

According to the mythological accounts, the early history of the city of Athens was marked by a power conflict between the male and female gods, Poseidon and Athena. Resentment between the sexes is expressed in this story by the image of rape, the act by which Erichthonius is conceived.

Cecrops, who ruled Athens for fifty years, was an odd-looking king, for he was a man from the waist up, but a dragon from the waist down. During his reign Hephaestus, the lame blacksmith of the gods, attempted to rape Athena. His attempt was unsuccessful, and his seed fell on Mother Earth, who conceived and gave birth to Erichthonius. This name is the combination of the Greek words for wool and earth. Athena desired to hide the child from the other gods, so she placed him in a basket which she entrusted to the daughters of Cecrops, instructing them not to look inside. Herse, on the left, and Pandrosos in the middle obeyed Athena's instructions, but Aglaurus, on the right, is overcome with curiosity, and she opens the basket. This is the moment depicted in the painting. The girls are terrified by what they see - is it a baby encircled by a snake, or perhaps a creature with the body of a baby and the tail of a serpent? The sisters are so frightened that they throw themselves from the top of the Acropolis to their deaths. ***Do the sisters look as if they are frightened to death?*** Erichthonius was raised by Athena in her temple, and when he became king of Athens in his own right, he promoted the worship of this goddess in his city.

The artist has chosen to paint three sisters in the grip of mortal fear. ***Is it really their fear which is his primary interest, or is he more interested in something else, such as the way their bodies turn in space, their semi-nudity, or their beauty?***

Ovid. *Metamorphoses:* Book 2: 532-636
Apollodorus. *Gods and Heroes of the Greeks: The Library of Apollodorus.* 3. 6. p.203

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Snite Museum of Art
Gallery Guide

Part #2

Stories from History, Myth, and the Bible

Eighteenth Century Gallery, Second Floor

We hope this gallery guide will help our visitors enjoy the stories from history, myth, and the Bible, which are illustrated in sculpture and painting in the collections of the Snite Museum. When these works of art were first completed, the narratives they depict formed part of the common knowledge of many educated Europeans. Today, although the heroes and heroines may still be familiar, people have often forgotten the details which make each story distinctive. One of the most fascinating aspects of a good story is the way it changes when it is retold. All of the stories in this gallery guide have been reinterpreted in painting or sculpture by artists who probably referred to the sources mentioned in this text.

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The Eighteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

Lucius Quintius Cincinnatus Called from the Plow to the Dictatorship of Rome
Studio of Giambattista Tiepolo.
Italian. 1696-1770.
Oil on canvas.

The story of Cincinnatus is recounted by Livy in his *Early History of Rome.* Modern historians believe that these events are more likely to be founded on legend than fact.

Cincinnatus was born around 519 B.C., and he impoverished himself financially by giving all his money to help his son who was charged with a capital crime. A crisis developed in Rome when the government, led by two consuls, was unable to withstand the pressure of repeated attacks by local tribes. After having been elected consul once, Cincinnatus refused to stand for re-election, saying that a dictatorship was the only system that could work for Rome. Then he retired to his three acre farm in the country.

Sometime later when Minucius, one of the consuls, led a division of Roman soldiers on the attack, the enemy surrounded the Romans and laid siege to them behind a circle of earthworks. Fearing defeat, the senate remembered Cincinnatus's belief that a dictator could help Rome, and they sent a group of envoys to ask him to save his state. They found Cincinnatus, dirty and sweating, plowing his fields. This is the scene illustrated in the painting. ***Can you see what changes the artist has made for his own interpretation of the story? Why do you think Cincinnatus is depicted as such a young man in the painting, when Livy makes clear that he was middle aged?*** Livy includes the detail that when he saw the messengers, Cincinnatus sent his wife to fetch his toga so that he could receive the official news wearing appropriate dress. ***In the painting what detail has the artist included to show that the envoys are government officials?***

Cincinnatus agreed to become dictator for six months, and he entered Rome with great acclaim. He quickly overcame the enemy by encircling their troops which had besieged Minucius's Roman army. When Cincinnatus's men attacked the enemy from the outside, Minucius's men attacked them from the inside. The enemy forces were therefore sandwiched between two Roman

armies, and they quickly surrendered. Cincinnatus returned to Rome as a hero, but he refused to stay in power as dictator for longer than fifteen days. He gave up his dictatorship and returned to his life as a farmer. Through this act Cincinnatus left a powerful legacy of Roman virtue, for he combined public service and military leadership with a disregard for wealth and fame.

The Legacy of Cincinnatus in America

In 1783 a group of officers from the Continental Army formed the Society of the Cincinnati before they disbanded after the Revolutionary War. George Washington was the society's first president. The society was made up of American and French officers and their heirs who took Cincinnatus as their patron and example. The society still exists today in America and France.

In 1790 the city of Losantiville in southwestern Ohio was renamed Cincinnati after the Society of the Cincinnati.

Livy. *Early History of Rome*, Vol. 3, pp. 181-200
Chaffanjon, Arnaud. *Les Grands Ordres de la Chevalerie*, p. 200

The Eighteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

The Finding of Moses

Benjamin West.
American. 1738-1820.
Oil on canvas.

Pharoah, the king of Egypt, feared the growing strength of the Hebrews living in his country, so he enslaved the people and ordered that all Hebrew boys be drowned in the river Nile at birth. A Hebrew woman from the tribe of Levi gave birth to a son and, fearing for the child's life, kept him hidden for three months. When she could no longer conceal him, she laid the boy in a papyrus basket which she had coated with pitch in order to make it watertight. ***Can you find the basket in the painting?*** She placed the basket among the reeds at the edge of the river, while the baby's sister Miriam hid nearby, to see what would happen. ***What familiar Egyptian landmarks has the painter included in the background of this picture?***

Pharoah's daughter, accompanied by her maidservants, comes down to the river to bathe. She sees the basket and opens it to discover a crying baby boy, whom she recognizes as a Hebrew. Moses' sister now approaches the princess, and asks if she should go to find a woman from among the Hebrews to nurse the baby. ***Can you see which figure might be Miriam asking this question?*** The princess tells Miriam to go and find a nurse, and Miriam brings Moses' own mother to the riverside. Pharoah's daughter tells Moses' mother that she will pay her for suckling the child. In this way Moses was nursed by his own mother, but adopted and saved by Pharoah's daughter. She called him Moses, a name which derives from the word "to draw out," because she had drawn him out of the river. When he became an adult Moses was involved in many miracles, God gave him the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, and he led his people out of their captivity in Egypt.

This story concerns two groups of people: the powerful Egyptians and their slaves, the Hebrews. ***Is it clear which is which in this picture?***

Exodus: Chapters 1 and 2.

The Eighteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

Diana and Endymion

Jean Restout.
French. 1692-1768.
Oil on canvas. c.1724.

This Greek myth is one of a few stories which undergoes a reversal of meaning as it passes through history. Such reversals are unusual, so it is particularly interesting to consider how and why this may have happened.

In the second century A.D. the Greek writer Lucian described briefly the love of Diana for Endymion in his *Dialogues of the Gods.* Diana (Artemis in Greek), virgin goddess of the hunt, was one of the twelve gods and goddesses who lived on Mount Olympus. After Cupid shot her with his arrow she was compelled to fall in love with Endymion, a young shepherd who was sleeping on Mount Latmus in Greece. In order to chastely gaze forever on this beautiful youth, Diana asked Jupiter to give him eternal sleep so that he would always remain youthful. Jupiter granted her wish, and thus Diana found herself in the unusual position of the female lover who has rendered her beloved helpless.

It was in France in particular that the metamorphosis of Diana's story occurred. From the sixteenth century onwards queens, princesses and royal mistresses had themselves depicted in portraits and narrative scenes as Diana the Huntress. Gradually the characteristics of Luna, goddess of the moon, blended with those of Diana, who became a powerful figure of the night, a huntress and active lover rivaling even Venus. ***What details has the artist included in this painting to show the viewer that this scene is a nocturne concerning the night, the moon, the hunt and love?***

During the centuries in which Diana changed from being an armed and chaste huntress to an active and strong lover, the powerful women of France used this new interpretation of the goddess as an allegory for their own initiative and strength. ***Which type of the goddess has the painter depicted here?*** It seems likely that the character of Diana changed to reflect the needs and desires of the powerful women of France -- the myth shifted in response to social and political needs.

Lucien de Samosate. *Oeuvres Completes.* Vol 1. p.120.

The Eighteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

Achilles Mourning the Death of Patroklos
Jean-Simon Berthelemy
French. 1743-1811.
Oil on canvas. c.1780.

Homer's *Iliad* opens with the Greek king Agamemnon insulting the honor of his countryman Achilles. In an effort to protect his prestige, Achilles responds by retiring from the Trojan War. In a warrior society however, a man can only achieve glory by fighting in battle, so this retirement is an unproductive act. When Achilles learned that the Trojans had taken control of the fighting, he compromised by allowing his close friend Patroklos to advance into battle wearing Achilles' own armor. Patroklos was then slain by Hektor, the mightiest of the Trojan warriors. Filled with grief and fury, Achilles was stung into entering the battle with the aim of avenging his friend's death by treating Hektor in the most shameful way possible. Achilles chased Hektor four times around Troy and finally caught him with the help of the goddess Athena. Achilles slew Hektor and, tying his ankles to the back of a chariot as is depicted in the painting, dragged the naked corpse around the city while Hektor's suffering family watched from the city walls. Achilles finally returned the body to Hektor's father Priam, promising that the Greeks would not continue their attack until the Trojans had taken time to conduct a burial ceremony.

In this painting Achilles has turned his attention from the battle with Hektor to the expression of his own grief for his dead friend. ***Can you identify the object that Achilles is leaning against? What is its significance to the story?*** Overhead, a winged figure holding a crown reminds the viewer that this victory came at a terrible cost.

Is this painter more concerned to tell Homer's story or to interpret it anew for his own time?

Homer: *Iliad: Books 16-24.*

The Eighteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

The Rape of Proserpina/Persephone

Jean-Francois de Troy
French. 1679-1752.
Oil on canvas. c.1733.

Venus, goddess of love, looked down from Mount Olympus and saw Pluto, lord of the underworld, driving around the island of Sicily in his chariot. She wanted to increase her power over all the gods, so she told her son Cupid to shoot Pluto with one of his arrows, so that the god would fall in love with Persephone, daughter of Ceres, goddess of the harvest. There are three little winged boys in this picture -- ***which one do you think is Cupid?***

Not suspecting any danger, Persephone was picking flowers with her friends by a pool of deep water. Suddenly Pluto appeared in his chariot driving his four black horses. The painter has chosen to depict the moment when Pluto captures Persephone as she cries out in protest and calls for her mother's help. Cyane, the water nymph, seen in the lower left of the painting, tries to stop Pluto's progress. ***What is she doing?*** She exclaims that Pluto should not force or frighten Persephone into a marriage against her will. Pluto is infuriated by Cyane's words, and, using his royal scepter to open a hole in the pool, he disappears through it into the underworld with his chariot, his horses and Persephone.

Cyane grieved at her failure to save Persephone, and she was never seen again, for her body dissolved with her tears into the water of the pool. Two putti, little winged boys, seen to the left and right of Pluto's chariot, act as guardian spirits. ***What does one of them carry to help Persephone see in the underworld?***

Although Pluto made Persephone his wife and queen, she was miserable in the dark and gloomy underworld. Her mother Ceres was also so unhappy at having lost her daughter, that she forgot to look after the crops and vegetation. Gradually all the plants died and winter came. After a long and fruitless search Ceres finally returned to the pool into which Cyane had dissolved and Persephone had disappeared. When Ceres saw Persephone's belt floating on the surface of the water, she realized that her daughter must have been taken down into the underworld. Then Ceres drove her chariot to Mount Olympus where Jupiter reigned as king of the gods. She asked him to

force Pluto to release Persephone. Jupiter agreed that this would be possible as long as Persephone had not eaten anything, for no-one can leave the world of the dead having once eaten its food. But Persephone had already been in the underworld for some time, and she had become so hungry that she had eaten seven seeds of a pomegranate. When Jupiter heard of this he decreed that she must spend half the year with her husband in the underworld, and the other half with her mother on earth. This story explains the changing of the seasons, for when she is happy in the company of her daughter, Ceres causes all fruits and flowers to grow, but when she is sad because Persephone has left her, she grieves, forgets her responsibilities, and winter comes to the land.

Do you think the artist has been faithful to Ovid's text, or has he given new meanings to the story by including details not mentioned in the original?

Ovid. *Metamorphoses. Book 5. Lines 348-678.*

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Designed by Richard Grey, Snite Museum of Art.

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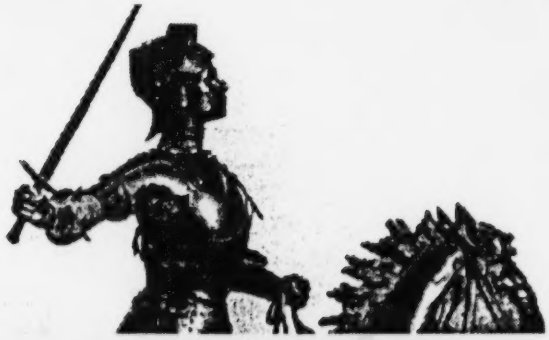


Snite Museum of Art
Gallery Guide
Part #3

Stories from History, Myth, and the Bible

Nineteenth Century Gallery, Second Floor

We hope this gallery guide will help our visitors enjoy the stories from history, myth, and the Bible, which are illustrated in sculpture and painting in the collections of the Snite Museum. When these works of art were first completed, the narratives they depict formed part of the common knowledge of many educated Europeans. Today, although the heroes and heroines may still be familiar, people have often forgotten the details which make each story distinctive. One of the most fascinating aspects of a good story is the way it changes when it is retold. All of the stories in this gallery guide have been reinterpreted in painting or sculpture by artists who probably referred to the sources mentioned in this text.

When you look at a painting or sculpture illustrating a story contained in this guide, see if you can notice if the artist has either stayed faithful to his source or if he has changed the events of the original story. If you do find some changes, can you think why the artist might have made them? Do the changes affect the original meaning of the story? These are just some of the questions we can ask each other when we think about storytelling in art.

The Nineteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

Hylas and the Nymph

Baron Francois Pascal Gerard (and Studio)
French. 1770-1837.
Oil on canvas. c.1826/27.

Theokritos was the Greek poet who developed the genre of "pastoral" in the third century B.C. The pastoral poet celebrates and idealizes the charms of rustic life for the sophisticated urban reader. In his idylls Theokritos creates fantasy and drama, he uses jokes and irony, and storytelling is one of his chief interests. Greek myths usually tell the stories of beautiful young girls who find themselves suddenly in danger of kidnap or seduction. In this story the situation is reversed when a beautiful young man is unexpectedly abducted by nymphs.

Herakles, one of the greatest classical heroes, fell in love with Hylas, a beautiful young man whose long curly hair was his crowning glory. The two men spent every moment together, and Herakles taught Hylas all he could to make him a brave and honorable warrior. When the Argonauts set out on their journey to look for the Golden Fleece, Herakles and Hylas accompanied them. After sailing for three days the heroes decided to spend the night on land, and they anchored in the Propontis. Hylas landed and set out to look for water for the evening meal. When he found a stream he saw three girls bathing, and realized that they were nymphs or Naiads, the spirits of the stream. The nymphs were captivated by the young man's beauty and, desiring to make him immortal, they dragged him into the stream when he bent towards the water, and he was never seen again. ***How can you tell that Hylas intended to take water back to his companions? Is Hylas pleased or frightened to meet the nymph? Why do you think the painter changed the number of nymphs who were in the stream?***

Herakles was overcome with grief and anger at the loss of Hylas. He set out in search of the young man, and even though Herakles heard Hylas' voice answering him faintly from under the water, he never saw him again. The Argonauts did not wait for Herakles to return but set sail without him. Herakles followed them later on foot, taking a land route.

Theokritos: *Idyll 13.*

The Nineteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

The Fury of Achilles

Alexandre-Denis Abel de Pujol.
French. 1787-1861.
Oil on canvas. 1810.

In his epic poem *The Iliad,* Homer describes a heroic age in which status, honor, and reputation are constantly threatened by insult and revenge. ***How does the painter make these warriors look heroic?*** The story opens with Achilles and Agamemnon quarrelling over two women who have been awarded to them as prizes of war. Anger is the subject of this painting. ***How is it expressed?***

King Agamemnon, standing at the right in a red robe, took for his trophy Chryses, the daughter of a priest of the god Apollo. A seer or prophet advised Agamemnon to give up Chryses, which he agreed to do on the condition that he receive Briseis, Achilles' war prize. This suggestion so infuriated Achilles, standing in the left foreground of the painting, that he reached for his sword in order to attack Agamemnon. At this moment the goddess Athena appears, visible only to Achilles, and persuades him not to seek revenge, promising that he will receive a far greater reward later. ***How can we tell that Achilles is the only person who can see Athena?***

Achilles puts back his sword but speaks to Agamemnon in scorn. Nestor, the old king of Pylos, who stands in the center wearing a red robe with his arms extended, unsuccessfully attempts to bring about a reconciliation. Chryses is returned to her father and Agamemnon takes Briseis, while Achilles, out of anger and indignation, refuses to fight for the Greeks. ***Does the behaviour of these famous warriors contrast with their heroic looks?***

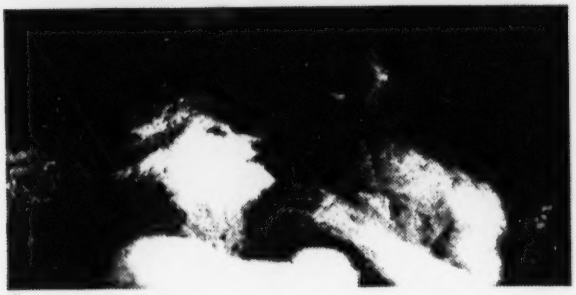
In this painting Pujol has combined several events that take place at various moments in Books I and II of *The Iliad.* The type of conflict illustrated here, which directly involves the gods in the actions of mortals, is a recurrent theme throughout the poem.

Homer: *The Iliad. Books 1 and 11.*
Christopher Logue: *Kings: An Account of Books I and II of Homer's Iliad.*

The Nineteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

Venus and Adonis

Pierre-Paul Prud'hon
French. 1758-1823.
Oil on panel. c. 1812.



European artists chose to depict Venus, the goddess of love, more often than any other mythical figure. ***Why do you suppose rich people wanted to buy pictures of this particular goddess?*** In his poem *Metamorphoses,* Ovid recounts many fables about Venus, whose amorous adventures were sometimes happy and sometimes tragic. Supernatural forces play a part in this story, for Venus is compelled to fall in love with Adonis after one of Cupid's arrows accidentally pierces her breast.

Prud'hon has painted the scene in which Venus takes a rest from hunting in order to warn her beloved Adonis, who is mortal, that he should not risk death by chasing dangerous wild animals with horns. The following passage from Ovid is probably the one which the painter has illustrated:

> *"Here's a couch*
> *Of grassy turf, and a canopy of poplar,*
> *I would like to lie there with you. And she lay there,*
> *Making a pillow for him of her breast,*
> *And kisses for her story's punctuation."*

The couple lie together in the woods while Venus tells Adonis the story of Atalanta and Hippomones, lovers who were turned into lions as a punishment for disrespect shown to the ancient gods. ***Do Venus and Adonis look as if they are in love? Can you think how the foreground figures, the little boys and the dog, refer to aspects of Venus's and Adonis's stories?***

Venus's fears for Adonis were fully realized when he scorned her warning and hunted a wild boar. The animal charged and stabbed Adonis fatally with its horns. Venus was riding in the sky in her chariot pulled by swans when she heard Adonis's groans. She hurried back to find him lying in a pool of blood on the yellow sand. Venus reproached fate's involvement in her life, and

dedicated the anemone, a flower whose petals fall too quickly and too soon, as a memorial to her brief love for Adonis.

Ovid. *Metamorphoses. Book 10, 298-739.*

The Nineteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

Equestrian Joan of Arc

Paul Du Bois.
French. 1829-1905.
Bronze. c.1889.

The tradition of the national hero immortalized in a free-standing equestrian sculpture goes back to the Romans, whose statue of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.) became a model for later generations of Europeans and Americans. The equestrian monument exalted the power and military success of great men throughout European history. As the only well-known female military leader, Joan of Arc is unique in having been depicted in a manner otherwise reserved for heroic men.

Joan of Arc (c. 1412-1431) was a peasant girl who lived in Lorraine, a region in northeastern France. ***Has the sculptor made the mounted figure look like a woman?*** At this time the French and the English were fighting each other in the Hundred Years War (1337-1453). When she was thirteen Joan first heard the voices of Saints Catherine, Margaret, and Michael, which commanded her to raise the English siege of Orleans, to have the dauphin Charles (heir to the French throne) crowned king at Reims cathedral, and to drive the English armies out of France. Joan won her greatest military victory in 1429 when, mounted on a horse and dressed as a man wearing armor, she led the French troops in raising the siege of Orleans. ***How does the sculptor refer to military victory in the way he has modelled the figure of Joan and her horse?***

Even though she had championed the cause and coronation of Charles VII, he did nothing to help her when the Burgundians captured her in battle in 1430. The Burgundians sold Joan to their English allies, who turned her over to the ecclesiastical court of the inquisition in Rouen, where she was tried for witchcraft and heresy in a six-month trial. The clergy who tried Joan could not believe that such a seemingly simple and uneducated peasant girl could possess such intelligence and confidence as she did without the help of the devil, and she was burned at the stake as a witch in 1431. A formal retrial in 1455 resulted in the reversal of the original verdict. Joan was canonized in 1920, and her feast day is celebrated on May 30th.

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Barrett, W. P. (trans)*The Trial of Jeanne D'Arc*
Marina Warner: *Joan of Arc: The Image of Female Heroism*

The Nineteenth Century Gallery
Second Floor

Study for "The Nights of Penelope"
Pierre-Paul Leon Glaize
French. 1842-1932.
Oil on canvas. 1865.

Penelope, the young bride of Odysseus, was left on the island of Ithaca with her infant son Telemachus when her husband departed to join the Trojan War. Odysseus was absent for twenty years, indicating that he had probably died, and many suitors came to the island seeking Penelope's hand in marriage. These suitors arranged extravagant parties in her home, attempting to force her to choose one of them by bringing about her financial ruin. Then Penelope, still faithful to her husband, devised a trick. She told the suitors that she would only remarry when she had finished weaving a burial shroud for her father-in-law. Every day she wove in public, but every night she unravelled her work in secret. ***Which scene has the painter illustrated? Is Penelope weaving or unravelling? How can you tell?***

Penelope managed to deceive the suitors for several years, but they finally discovered her trick and were on the point of forcing her to choose a new husband when Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, returned to Ithaca. Together with Telemachus and several faithful servants, he attacked and killed the suitors. Penelope was finally convinced of the beggar's true identity when he revealed facts known only to the two of them.

Penelope is remembered for marital fidelity and patience: a woman of beauty and character who was devoted to her husband and son. At the left of the painting a statue of Athena reminds the viewer that this goddess helped Odysseus during his journeys, and, as the patroness of weavers, she protected Penelope's work.

Has the painter remained faithful to Homer's account of this story or has he introduced some of his own particular ideas?

Homer: *The Odyssey, Book 2.*

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